

What is claimed is:

1. Network apparatus comprising:

5 a plurality of service-option resources each having
a respective numerical network address;

an address server storing said numerical network
addresses and a respective logical name corresponding to
each numerical network address, said address server
responding to queries by providing a numerical network
10 address corresponding to a logical name contained in a
respective query;

an authorization server storing respective user
profiles for identifying service-option resources to
which each one of a plurality of users are authorized to
15 use; and

a plurality of service selection gateways coupled to
said service-option resources, said address server, and
said authorization server, each service selection gateway
1) receiving user traffic from a respective user directed
20 to a nominal destination, 2) determining if said nominal
destination should be redirected to a respective logical
name corresponding to one of said service-option
resources in response to a respective user profile, and
3) querying said address server for a respective
25 numerical network address to redirect according to said
respective logical name.

2. The network apparatus of claim 1 wherein said
numerical network addresses are comprised of IP
30 addresses.

3. The network apparatus of claim 1 wherein said
service-option resources include subscription services
and wherein said network apparatus further comprises a
35 service selection dashboard through which said users
obtain authorization for said subscription services.

4. The network apparatus of claim 1 wherein said service-option resources include at least one firewall resource.

5 5. The network apparatus of claim 1 wherein said service-option resources include at least one virus-scanning resource.

10 6. The network apparatus of claim 1 wherein said service-option resources include at least one content-filtering resource.

15 7. The network apparatus of claim 1 wherein said service-option resources include at least one walled-garden resource.

20 8. A method of forwarding user traffic in a computer network including a plurality of service-option resources each having a respective numerical network address, said method comprising the steps of:

assigning a logical name corresponding to each of said numerical network addresses;

storing each of said numerical network addresses with its respective logical name in an address server;

25 storing respective user profiles for identifying service-option resources to which each one of a plurality of users are authorized to use;

30 receiving at a service selection gateway user traffic from a user in the form of a packet having a nominal destination;

determining a respective logical name to which said nominal destination should be redirected in response to a respective user profile;

35 said service selection gateway querying said address server for a respective numerical network address corresponding to said respective logical name;

said address server responding with said respective numerical network address; and

said service selection gateway redirecting said packet to said respective numerical network address.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the
5 steps of:

reconfiguring said service-option resources,
resulting in changed numerical network addresses; and
modifying said stored numerical network addresses on
said address server;

10 whereby said service selection gateway continues to
redirect said packets to a correct numerical network
address after said reconfiguring step without requiring
any changes to said service selection gateway.

15 10. The method of claim 8 wherein said numerical
network addresses are comprised of IP addresses.

11. The method of claim 8 further comprising the
step of directing said user to a service selection
20 dashboard for configuring said user profile.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein said service-
option resources include at least one firewall resource.

25 13. The method of claim 8 wherein said service-
option resources include at least one virus-scanning
resource.

14. The method of claim 8 wherein said service-
30 option resources include at least one content-filtering
resource.

15. The method of claim 8 wherein said service-
option resources include at least one walled-garden
35 resource.